



TOWN OF CLAYTON FIRE DEPARTMENT

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To: Clayton Homeowners & Residents

From: Lee Barbee, Fire Chief

Topic: Ways That Homeowners & Residents Can Assist the Fire Department

This handout is filled with things that you and your neighbors can do to help the Clayton Fire Department better serve and protect you in an emergency. The information all comes from the NC Department of Insurance's "Fire Prevention Code" or "Fire Code" which was adopted as part of Clayton's Town Ordinances [95.01]. It is enforced not only within the Town limits, but in the two miles outside of the town limits where we also provide fire service.

1. **The fire department cannot help you until we find you!**

Be sure your house number is easily visible from a distance. The Fire Code states the building's identification should be "placed in a position that is plainly legible and visible from the street or road fronting the property."

- Ensure the numbers are large enough that they can be read at night and in all weather conditions. Reflective numbers work best. The Fire Code [Section 505.1] states the numbers "shall be a minimum of 4 inches high with a minimum width of 0.5 inches".
- Town ordinance [100.04] requires that house numbers "shall be maintained within a three-foot perimeter of an entrance whereby they are visible and readable from the street or road on which it fronts."
- Ensure the numbers are installed on your mailbox **and** on your house.
- Ensure vegetation does not cover or partially cover any identifying numbers or letters. Town ordinance [100.07] states, "Building numbers shall not be obstructed from view by shrubs or vegetation as viewed from the public road."

2. **We can't get to your house if our fire engine can't fit down your street or driveway!**

Most modern fire engines are large, often exceeding 8 feet in width and over 10 feet high.

You need to be sure that access to your home is open enough to accommodate these vehicles.

- Fire Code specifications for "fire apparatus access roads" states that roads shall have "an unobstructed width of not less than 20 feet...and an unobstructed vertical clearance of not less than 13 feet 6 inches."
- Keep streets and cul-de-sacs open, as much as possible, by keeping them free of vehicles, trailers, trash receptacles, basketball goals and other objects that could limit or impede movement of fire apparatus.
- Ensure gates and culverts leading to your home are wide enough to allow ready access by emergency vehicle.
- Trim bushes and trees along your driveway to provide an opening large enough for emergency vehicles.
- Ensure the access lane to your house is flat and free of large holes and tight curves and be sure it can be used in all weather conditions.

3. **We can get the water we need to put out a fire if we can't find the fire hydrant!**

Fire hydrants are installed in certain places to provide a ready water source for large fires. If a hydrant is located on or adjacent to your property, be sure it can be seen from the street. Make sure the area around the hydrant is open.

- Fire Code [Section 507.5.4] requires that “unobstructed access to fire hydrants shall be maintained at all times,” and that the fire department shall not be hindered from gaining “immediate access” to fire hydrants.
- Ensure that the hydrant can be seen from a distance and from all approaches.
- Trim bushes, trees and other vegetation away from hydrants so there is adequate room for a firefighter to connect needed hoses and fittings. A minimum of 3 feet in all directions is required by the Fire Code, but 8 feet is preferred.
- Minimize mulch or other fill around hydrants because the Fire Prevention Code also requires a minimum of 18 inches from the ground to center of cap.

4. **Do what you can to protect your family and your property!**

- Be sure to install smoke detectors on every floor of your home and replace your batteries at least once each year.
- Ensure your fire alarm system is functioning properly and you are in compliance with Town ordinances on “Emergency Alarm Systems” [Section 114.02 through 114.07].
- Register your alarm system with the Clayton Police Department by going to <http://www.townofclaytonnc.org/securityalarmregistration.aspx> and make sure you update this permit if there are any changes to your system.
- Alarm system users or a representative shall respond to a fire alarm within 30 minutes after being notified by Johnston County 911. Failure to do so can result in a civil penalty.

Please keep these guidelines handy! We look forward to helping protect your home & family!